

## Vermont State Board of Education Monthly Report – May 2009

The State Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting on May 19 at the Northwest Technical Center, St. Albans.

### ***Transformation in Action***

#### ***The Edge Academy, Essex Town School***

**District** - Jim Fitzpatrick, Ellen Thompson and four educators from the Essex Town School District met with the Board at its meeting on Tuesday to share their planning for “The Edge Academy,” a new option for students, age 9-14, being created within the Essex Town School District. There are no grades, students will be grouped by “readiness groups”, there are flexible school hours and students will demonstrate learning with an online portfolio. It will utilize student-centric, project-based learning with community and global connections. Online, web-based tools will be used to expand the notion of “school” and place-based learning. The Academy set a goal of 90 students for the first year -- over 100 students applied! *The Edge Academy* will open September 2 in a wing of the Essex Town Middle School. The State Board is thrilled to see this application of its transformation initiative in action. If you would like more information, contact Jim Fitzpatrick ([Jfitzpatrick@ETSD.org](mailto:Jfitzpatrick@ETSD.org)); or go to: [https://www.edline.net/pages/Essex\\_Town\\_SD/The\\_EDGE\\_Academy](https://www.edline.net/pages/Essex_Town_SD/The_EDGE_Academy)).

**NB:** If you are aware of or are involved with a transformative initiative such as the one described above, the State Board is interested in hearing about what you are doing, having you attend a State Board to talk about your implementation, or possibly visiting your program. Please contact Carol King at [Carol.C.King@state.vt.us](mailto:Carol.C.King@state.vt.us).

### **Waiver Request for School Quality Standards**

**Rule 2122** - Commissioner Vilaseca explained that the Department will be asking the State Board in June to waive the reporting and visit requirements contained in Rule 2122 of the School Quality Standards. At this time, the commissioner does not believe to be prudent to dedicate department staff and school staff time in a review process, the content of which may need to be substantially changed because of the work of the Education Transformation Policy

Commission and the upcoming strategic planning process. Additionally, department staff are facing adjusted work because of ARRA requirements at the same time positions are being cut. SQS must be factored into any restructuring necessary to address all critical tasks. There is no statutory requirement for either the status report or the on-site visits. The Commissioner will continue to have authority (16 V.S.A. §165 (e)) to determine at any time that an individual school does not meet the School Quality Standards and take appropriate action to ensure compliance.

### ***ARRA Stimulus Update***

Regularly updated information on ARRA can be found on the department’s Web site at: [http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/recovery\\_act.html](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/recovery_act.html). Contact: Rae Ann Knopf, (802) 828-0555 or [rae.knopf@state.vt.us](mailto:rae.knopf@state.vt.us).

### **ARRA: IDEA-B Basic and Pre-School Flow Through Application Forms for Regular Grant Funds and ARRA Funds for FY 2010**

View the forms and information needed to apply for FY-2010 IDEA-B Basic and Pre-School Flow Through grants. This includes both the regular grant funds and the funds made available for IDEA-B under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Visit [http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/recovery\\_act.html#leap](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/recovery_act.html#leap). Contact: Rae Ann Knopf at (802) 828-0555 or [rae.knopf@state.vt.us](mailto:rae.knopf@state.vt.us) or Karin Edwards at [karin.edwards@state.vt.us](mailto:karin.edwards@state.vt.us) or (802) 828-5118.

### **ARRA: McKinney Vento ARRA Funding for FY 2009-2010** - This funding to LEAs is

intended to assist with excess transportation expenses to schools of origin, as well as school supplies and other allowable expenses that eliminate barriers for homeless students to enroll, attend and succeed in school. Visit <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm/homeless.html#mckinney> for more information. Contact: Wendy Ross at (802) 828-5148 or [wendy.ross@state.vt.us](mailto:wendy.ross@state.vt.us).

**ARRA: 2009 Allocation for Qualified School Construction Bonds** - Certain school facility improvement projects may be financed at ZERO interest. Application criteria and instructions are

available at [http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm\\_construction.html#qscb](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_construction.html#qscb).

Contact: Cathy Hilgendorf at (802) 828-5402 or [cathy.hilgendorf@state.vt.us](mailto:cathy.hilgendorf@state.vt.us)

### ***From the Commissioner***

Deputy Commissioner of Transformation Bill Romond will be retiring June 30th, following 41 years in the field of education in Vermont. Commissioner Vilaseca notes that while this will be a huge loss, the Transformation is bigger than any one person, the Board or the department. Romond will continue as a member to the Education Policy Commission.

David White, director of the department's Lifelong Learning Team, will also be leaving the Department on June 30 to serve as director of curriculum, instruction and assessment at the Lamoille North Supervisory Union.

### ***From the Department***

**AHS Background Registry Checking Application for Adult Abuse and Child Protection Registries** - The Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS) is developing an online screening system to streamline pre-employment background check requests against the Vermont Adult Abuse and Child Protection Registries. This new automated, secure system will assist superintendents and headmasters of recognized or approved independent schools in complying with the recently enacted Act 1 requiring background checks on all new hires or contractors that may have unsupervised contact with children. AHS, in coordination with the Department of Education, will be reaching out to selected superintendent offices in the coming weeks to ask them to demo and provide feedback on the application. Following final development, AHS will contact school districts with detailed instructions about how to use the new system to request background checks and receive results electronically. The text of Act 1 can be found on the State Legislature Web site at <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/2010/Acts/ACT001.pdf>.

AHS Contact: Wendy Magee at (802) 241-2639 or [wmagee@vdh.state.vt.us](mailto:wmagee@vdh.state.vt.us)

**The 16th Annual Vermont Middle Grades Summer Institute** - The Vermont Middle Grades Professional Development Collaborative announces and invites all educators serving 10-15

year olds to attend this four-day, residential institute at Vermont Technical College in Randolph Center beginning at 3 p.m. on Sunday, June 28, and concluding at 5 p.m. on Thursday, July 2, 2009. Along with the five strands offered, the Collaborative is offering an exciting opportunity to participate in the GEAR UP Teacher Strand which is now an integral part of the Middle Grades Institute. The Collaborative is presently recruiting teams of teachers from middle schools to participate with a group of their students. As an incentive to participate, teachers will receive a stipend and free room and board at the Institute. The institute brochure and more information can be found at <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html#middle>. To register, visit <http://Middlegradescollaborative.org> or call (802) 635-1449. Contact: Heather Schneider at (802) 828-5130 or [heather.schneider@state.vt.us](mailto:heather.schneider@state.vt.us).

\* \* \* \* \*

**For information on Department of Education sponsored events beginning June 2009**, visit: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html>. The calendar is updated regularly.

**For more information on the Vermont State Board of Education**, visit: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/mainboard.html>.

**To view approved minutes of SBE meetings:** <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/board/schedule.html#approved>

**To view State Board of Education's Monthly Reports:** [http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/board/schedule.html#monthly\\_reports](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/board/schedule.html#monthly_reports)

**2009 State Board of Education Meeting Dates:** June 22-23

